

## **U.S. Department of Education**

### **Saba**

Prepared October 2012

#### **Background**

In March 2003, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) first determined that Saba's standards and processes to evaluate medical education programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree are comparable to the standards of accreditation used to evaluate medical education programs in the United States. The NCFMEA last reaffirmed its determination of comparability in September 2009. The Committee also accepted a report on the country's accreditation activities in Spring 2012, and granted an extension of the country's recognition through March 2014, in light of the transition of medical school accreditation to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine, or the ACCM, has been the entity responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in Saba prior to the October 10, 2010 transition in the Netherlands Antilles, which decreed Saba a municipality of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The ACCM continues to accredit Saba and has submitted this report on the country's behalf.

This analysis provides a review of Saba's report of the ongoing transition of accreditation activities for the Saba University School of Medicine to the Netherlands.

#### **Summary of Findings**

The country has provided the information requested by the NCFMEA at its Spring 2012 meeting.

#### **Staff Analysis**

#### **Outstanding Issues**

**Report about transition activities and the communication between ACCM and the NVAO;**

#### **Country Narrative**

The Secretary's June 26, 2012 letter discusses the NCFMEA's request that (i) the ACCM provide a report to the NCFMEA for consideration at its fall 2012 meeting concerning "the transition activities and communication between ACCM and the Accrediting Organization for the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)" with respect to Saba, and (ii) "the ACCM request, and if obtained, provide the NCFME with written documentation" from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science that the "Ministry acknowledges ACCM as the accrediting agency for medical schools in Saba until March 31, 2014, the date that NVAO is expected to have decided whether to grant its own accreditation to the medical school(s) located on the island."

In a letter to Saba University School of Medicine dated February 3, 2012, the Dutch Ministry stated that the existing accreditation of the School of Medicine would be recognized through October 2013, the date by which the NVAO's accreditation process of the School of Medicine was anticipated to be completed. At the time of the March 2012 NCFMEA meeting, there was some concern on our part that the NVAO review could potentially extend beyond October 2013. As such, we requested that the NCFMEA consider extending the ACCM's recognition by the NCFMEA until March 2014.

Since that time, we have been in close contact with the School of Medicine regarding its progress with the NVAO review. Based on these discussions, the ACCM believes that the NVAO accreditation procedures are progressing on schedule and that the remainder of the process, as outlined, will be concluded no later than October 2013.

Accordingly, we have determined at this time that our previous request that the NCFMEA extend our recognition beyond October 2013 is not necessary and we respectfully withdraw our request. If circumstances change, we will of course inform the NCFMEA and, in conjunction with the School of Medicine, will seek an extension from the Dutch Ministry at that time. We do not anticipate that such steps will be necessary and as such, we understand that our recognition by the NCFMEA with respect to Saba will cease in October 2013.

The ACCM is monitoring Saba University on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands. It receives the Annual Database each February as well as visiting the Basic Science Campus on a biannual basis. The next visit is planned for February 2013 after which an interim report will be prepared.

The following clinical site visits have been planned for October 2012:

Leonard Chabert Hospital, Houma LA

De Kalb Medical Center GA

Memorial Regional Hollywood FL

Memorial Regional Hospital West FL

CHI/Miami Beach Community Hospital, Miami, FL.

### **Analyst Remarks to Narrative**

ACCM reports that it has been in close communication with the Saba University School of Medicine regarding the school's accreditation procedures with the NVAO. ACCM states that it believes the school's accreditation procedures with the NVAO are progressing on schedule to be concluded no later than October 2013 as stated in the letter from the Dutch Ministry to the Saba University School of Medicine. Therefore, the ACCM has respectfully requested to withdraw its original request to the NCFMEA for an extension of Saba's recognition by the NCFMEA until March 2014.

ACCM continues to monitor Saba University on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands to include review and analysis of the institution's annual database, as well as a biannual visit to the basic sciences campus. The ACCM will prepare an interim report after its next scheduled visit in February 2013. Visits to five clinical sites are also planned to take place in October 2012.

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**If obtained, a copy of written documentation from the Dutch Ministry of Health Education that the Ministry acknowledges ACCM as the accrediting agency for medical schools in Saba until March 31, 2014**

### **Country Narrative**

See response above. The letter, previously submitted, from the Dutch Ministry of Education Culture and Science, dated February 3, 2012 is herewith resubmitted for background information purposes.

[Exhibit 1]

### **Analyst Remarks to Narrative**

The country has resubmitted the original letter provided by the Dutch Ministry to the Saba University School of Medicine which provides for an October 2013 deadline. ACCM wishes to respectfully withdraw its request to the NCFMEA for an extension to March 31, 2014. Based on its assessment and close communication with the school, the ACCM anticipates that the accreditation schedule for the school is on schedule to be completed by October 2013 as stated in the attached letter.

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